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[*without reference to a Main Committee (A/69/L.40 and Add.1)*]

69/135. Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991 and the guiding principles contained in the annex thereto, other relevant General Assembly and Economic and Social Council resolutions and agreed conclusions of the Council,

Taking note of the reports of the Secretary-General on the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations[1] and on the Central Emergency Response Fund,[2]

Reaffirming the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence in the provision of humanitarian assistance, and reaffirming also the need for all actors engaged in the provision of humanitarian assistance in situations of complex emergencies and natural disasters to promote and fully respect these principles,

Deeply concerned about global challenges, such as the ongoing adverse impact of the world financial and economic crisis, climate change, the negative impact of the volatile food prices on food security and nutrition and the rapid urbanization of populations, and about their effect on the increasing vulnerability of populations and impact on the need for and provision of humanitarian and development assistance,

Noting the substantial increase over the last decade in global humanitarian funding requirements, welcoming non-traditional donors, emphasizing the need to mobilize adequate, predictable, timely and flexible resources for humanitarian assistance, based on and in proportion to assessed needs, with a view to ensuring fuller coverage of the needs in all sectors and across humanitarian emergencies, and recognizing in this regard the achievements of the Central Emergency Response Fund,

Emphasizing that strengthened needs analysis, risk management and strategic planning, in coordination with affected States, including through the use of open and

[1] A/69/80-E/2014/68.

[2] A/69/96.

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disaggregated data, are crucial elements to ensure a better informed, more effective, transparent and collective response to the needs of people affected by crises,

Reiterating the need for Member States, relevant United Nations organizations and other relevant actors to mainstream a gender perspective into humanitarian assistance, including by addressing the specific needs of women, girls, boys and men in a comprehensive and consistent manner, and to take into account the needs of affected populations, including persons with disabilities,

Expressing its deep concern about the increasing challenges faced by Member States and the United Nations humanitarian response system and their capacities as a result of the consequences of natural disasters, including those related to the continuing impact of climate change, and reaffirming the importance of implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters,[3] inter alia, by providing adequate resources for disaster risk reduction, including investment in disaster preparedness and capacity-building, and by working towards building back better in all phases from relief to development,

Expressing grave concern about the current unprecedented outbreak of the Ebola virus disease and its adverse impact on the affected countries, underscoring that the control of outbreaks of major infectious diseases requires proper early warning, preparedness, resilience-building, cross-sectoral action and greater national, regional and international collaboration, and in this regard stressing the continued need for a coordinated response to the Ebola outbreak,

Recognizing that developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States, remain acutely vulnerable to natural hazards and need adequate international cooperation, as appropriate, to strengthen their resilience in this regard,

Recognizing also that economic growth and sustainable development are essential for the prevention of and preparedness for natural disasters and other emergencies,

Recognizing further, in this respect, that building national and local preparedness and response capacity through, inter alia, appropriate and conducive public policies and international assistance, is critical to a more predictable and effective response and contributes to the achievement of humanitarian and development objectives, including enhanced resilience and a reduced need for humanitarian response,

Emphasizing that enhancing international cooperation on emergency humanitarian assistance is essential, and reaffirming its resolution 68/103 of 13 December 2013 on international cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development,

Emphasizing also the fundamentally civilian character of humanitarian assistance, and reaffirming, in situations in which military capacity and assets are used as a last resort to support the implementation of humanitarian assistance, the need for their use to be undertaken with the consent of the affected State and in conformity with international law, including international humanitarian law, as well as humanitarian principles,

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[3] A/CONF.206/6 and Corr.1, chap. I, resolution 2.

Condemning the increasing number of deliberate threats and violent attacks against humanitarian personnel and facilities, including medical personnel, their facilities and other humanitarian personnel exclusively engaged in medical duties, in a majority of cases affecting locally recruited personnel, noting with concern the negative implications for the provision of humanitarian assistance to populations in need, and in this regard welcoming the efforts such as the Health Care in Danger project of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, together with States, international and non-governmental organizations and other relevant stakeholders, to strengthen compliance with international humanitarian law by raising awareness and promoting preparedness to address the grave and serious humanitarian consequences arising from such violence,

Recognizing the high number of people affected by humanitarian emergencies, including the increasing number of internally displaced persons, of whom a majority are women and children, who are forcibly displaced owing to conflict, persecution, violence and other reasons, including terrorism, and who are often displaced for protracted periods, wherein the national authorities have the primary duty and responsibility to provide protection and humanitarian assistance and promote durable solutions for internally displaced persons within their jurisdiction, bearing in mind their particular needs,

Recognizing also the importance of the Geneva Conventions of 1949,[4] which include a vital legal framework for the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, including the provision of humanitarian assistance,

Noting with grave concern that violence, including gender-based violence, particularly sexual violence, and violence against children, continues to be deliberately directed against civilian populations during and after humanitarian situations,

Noting with appreciation the efforts that the United Nations continues to make to improve humanitarian response, including by strengthening humanitarian response capacities, improving humanitarian coordination, enhancing predictable and adequate funding and strengthening the accountability of all stakeholders, and recognizing the importance of strengthening emergency administrative procedures and funding to allow for an effective and needs-based response to emergencies,

Recognizing that, in strengthening the coordination of humanitarian assistance in the field, the organizations of the United Nations system should continue to consult and work in close coordination with national Governments,

1. *Welcomes* the outcome of the seventeenth humanitarian affairs segment of the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2014;[5]

2. *Requests* the Emergency Relief Coordinator to continue her efforts to strengthen the coordination and accountability of humanitarian assistance and leadership within the United Nations humanitarian response system, including through the transformative agenda of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, and calls upon relevant United Nations organizations and other relevant intergovernmental organizations, as well as other humanitarian and development actors, to continue to work with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian

[4] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, Nos. 970–973.

[5] See A/69/3, chap. VII. For the final text, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 3*.

Affairs of the Secretariat to enhance the coordination, effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian assistance;

3. *Also requests* the Emergency Relief Coordinator to continue to improve dialogue with all Member States on the relevant processes, activities and deliberations of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee;

4. *Encourages* Member States and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to continue to improve dialogue and collaboration on humanitarian issues, including on policy, in order to foster a more consultative and inclusive approach to humanitarian assistance;

5. *Welcomes* the continued efforts by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to build partnerships with regional organizations and non-traditional donors and the private sector, and encourages Member States and the United Nations system to continue to strengthen partnerships at the global, regional, national and local levels in support of national efforts in order to effectively cooperate to provide humanitarian assistance to those in need and ensure that their collaborative efforts adhere to the principles of neutrality, humanity, impartiality and independence;

6. *Encourages* Member States, the United Nations system and humanitarian and development organizations to continue to assess and improve, together with other relevant stakeholders, including the private sector, how innovation can be more systematically identified and integrated into humanitarian action in a sustainable manner and to promote the sharing of best practices and lessons learned on innovative tools, processes and approaches, including those from large-scale natural disasters, that could improve the effectiveness and quality of humanitarian response, and in this regard encourages all relevant stakeholders to continue to support the efforts of Member States, in particular developing countries, to strengthen their capacities, including through facilitating access to information and communication technologies;

7. *Welcomes* innovative practices that draw on the knowledge of people affected by humanitarian emergencies to develop locally sustainable solutions and to produce life-saving items locally, with minimal logistical and infrastructure implications;

8. *Calls upon* the relevant organizations of the United Nations system and, as appropriate, other relevant humanitarian actors to continue efforts to improve the humanitarian response to natural and man-made disasters and complex emergencies by further strengthening humanitarian response capacities at all levels, by continuing to strengthen the provision and coordination of humanitarian assistance at the global and field levels, including through existing cluster coordination mechanisms and in support of national authorities of the affected State, as appropriate, and by further enhancing efficiency, transparency, performance and accountability;

9. *Recognizes* the benefits of engagement and coordination with relevant humanitarian actors to the effectiveness of humanitarian response, and encourages the United Nations to continue to pursue efforts to strengthen partnerships at the global level with the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, relevant humanitarian non-governmental organizations and other participants in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue strengthening the support provided to United Nations resident/humanitarian coordinators and to United

Nations country teams, including by providing necessary training, identifying resources and improving the identification of and the selection process for United Nations resident/humanitarian coordinators, and enhancing their performance accountability;

11. *Calls upon* the Chair of the United Nations Development Group and the Emergency Relief Coordinator to continue enhancing their consultations before presenting final recommendations on the selection process for resident coordinators in countries likely to require significant humanitarian response operations;

12. *Requests* the United Nations to continue to strengthen its ability to recruit and deploy appropriately senior, skilled and experienced humanitarian staff quickly and flexibly, giving paramount consideration to the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, while paying due regard to gender equality and to recruiting on as wide a geographical basis as possible, and in this regard encourages the United Nations Development Group to strengthen the resident coordinator system, on which the humanitarian coordinator system is based, in order to ensure the full implementation of the management and accountability system of the Group and the resident coordinator system;

13. *Recognizes* that diversity of humanitarian staff brings value to humanitarian work and understanding of developing countries' contexts, and requests the Secretary-General to address further the insufficient diversity in geographical representation and gender balance in the composition of the humanitarian staff of the Secretariat and other United Nations humanitarian agencies, in particular regarding professional and high-level staff, and to report on measures taken in this regard in his annual report;

14. *Also recognizes* that accountability is an integral part of effective humanitarian assistance, and emphasizes the need for enhancing the accountability of humanitarian actors at all stages of humanitarian assistance;

15. *Reaffirms* the importance of implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters,[3] reiterates the importance of strengthening the effectiveness of national and local preparedness in line with priority five of the Framework, notes the fourth session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Geneva from 19 to 23 May 2013, and encourages States, the United Nations system and all stakeholders to continue to engage in the consultations on the successor to the Framework, culminating at the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, to be held in Sendai, Japan, from 14 to 18 March 2015;

16. *Calls upon* Member States, the United Nations and humanitarian and development organizations to continue to build the capacity at all levels of government and within local organizations and communities to better prepare for hazards and respond to and recover from disasters;

17. *Calls upon* Member States and the international community to increase and commit adequate, timely, flexible and predictable resources for disaster risk reduction in order to build resilience, including through complementary humanitarian and development programming and by further strengthening national and local capacities to prevent, prepare for and respond to humanitarian emergencies, and furthermore encourages closer cooperation between national stakeholders and humanitarian and development actors in this regard;

18. *Encourages* the United Nations system, humanitarian organizations and development organizations to continue their efforts to mainstream preparedness,

early action and early recovery into their programming, acknowledges that preparedness, early action and early recovery should receive further funding, and in this regard encourages the provision of timely, flexible, predictable and adequate resources, including from both humanitarian and development budgets, as appropriate;

19. *Urges* Member States, the United Nations and other relevant organizations to take further steps to provide a coordinated emergency response to the food and nutrition needs of affected populations, while aiming to ensure that such steps are supportive of national strategies and programmes aimed at improving food security;

20. *Expresses concern* about the challenges related to, inter alia, safe access to and use of fuel, firewood, alternative energy, water and sanitation, shelter and food and health-care services in humanitarian emergencies, and noting with appreciation initiatives at the national and international levels that promote effective cooperation in this regard;

21. *Encourages* the international community, including relevant United Nations organizations and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, to support efforts of Member States aimed at strengthening their capacity to prepare for and respond to disasters and to support efforts, as appropriate, to strengthen systems, especially early warning systems, for identifying and monitoring disaster risk, including vulnerability and natural hazards;

22. *Welcomes* the growing number of initiatives undertaken at the regional and national levels to promote the implementation of the Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance, encourages Member States and, where applicable, regional organizations to take further steps to review and strengthen operational and legal frameworks for international disaster relief, taking into account the Guidelines, as appropriate, and welcomes the valuable support that national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies are providing to their Governments in this area, in collaboration with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and other partners;

23. *Encourages* States to create an enabling environment for the capacity-building of local authorities and of national and local non-governmental and community-based organizations in order to ensure better preparedness in providing timely, effective and predictable humanitarian assistance, and encourages the United Nations and humanitarian organizations to provide support to such efforts, including, as appropriate, under the Common Framework for Preparedness of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, the United Nations Development Group and the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, through the transfer of technology and expertise to developing countries and through support to programmes aimed at enhancing the coordination capacities of affected States;

24. *Calls upon* Member States, the United Nations and humanitarian organizations to provide emergency assistance in ways that are supportive of recovery and long-term development, where appropriate, including through prioritizing humanitarian tools that strengthen resilience, such as, but not limited to, cash transfers, local procurement of food and services and social safety nets;

25. *Encourages* Member States and relevant United Nations organizations to examine their own financing mechanisms in order to improve, where possible, fast

and flexible financing for preparedness, response and the transition from relief to recovery;

26. *Takes note* of the efforts of Member States, the United Nations system and the international community to strengthen preparedness and local, national and regional humanitarian response capacity, and calls upon the United Nations and relevant partners to continue support in this regard;

27. *Encourages* efforts to provide safe and enabling learning environments and quality education for all, especially for girls and boys, in humanitarian emergencies, including in order to contribute to a smooth transition from relief to development;

28. *Encourages* the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to continue to work with Member States and relevant United Nations entities to facilitate the exchange of updated, accurate and reliable information, including through mutually comprehensible harmonized data, in order to ensure better assessment of needs in order to improve preparedness and humanitarian response;

29. *Calls upon* relevant United Nations organizations to support the improvement of the humanitarian programme cycle, in particular the development of strategic response plans and humanitarian needs overviews, including consolidated appeals processes, in consultation with the affected States in order to strengthen the coordination of humanitarian action, to meet the needs of people affected by humanitarian emergencies;

30. *Encourages* Member States to provide humanitarian funding based on, and in accordance with, the humanitarian appeals brought forward by the United Nations;

31. *Encourages* Member States and relevant United Nations organizations to explore innovative risk-sharing mechanisms and to base risk management funding on objective data;

32. *Requests* Member States, relevant humanitarian organizations of the United Nations system and other relevant humanitarian actors to ensure that all aspects of humanitarian response, including disaster preparedness and needs assessments, take into account the specific humanitarian needs and vulnerabilities of all components of the affected population, in particular girls, boys, women, older persons and persons with disabilities, including in the design and implementation of disaster risk reduction, humanitarian and recovery programming and post-humanitarian emergency reconstruction, and in this regard encourages efforts to ensure gender mainstreaming, including in the analysis of allocations and programme implementation, and through greater use of the gender marker, and emphasizes the importance of full participation of, in particular, women and persons with disabilities in decision-making processes related to humanitarian response;

33. *Calls upon* United Nations humanitarian organizations, in consultation with Member States, as appropriate, to strengthen the evidence base for humanitarian assistance by further developing common mechanisms to improve the quality, transparency and reliability of, and make further progress towards, common humanitarian needs assessments, including through improved collection, analysis and reporting of sex-, age- and disability-disaggregated data and taking into account environmental impact, to assess their performance in assistance and to ensure the most effective use of humanitarian resources by those organizations;

34. *Calls upon* the United Nations and its humanitarian partners to enhance accountability to Member States, including affected States, and all other stakeholders and to further strengthen humanitarian response efforts, including by monitoring and evaluating the provision of their humanitarian assistance, incorporating lessons learned into programming and consulting with the affected populations so that their needs are appropriately assessed and effectively addressed;

35. *Calls upon* donors to provide adequate, timely, predictable and flexible resources based on and in proportion to assessed needs, including for underfunded and forgotten emergencies, to consider providing early and multi-year commitments to pooled humanitarian funds and to continue to support diverse humanitarian funding channels, encourages efforts to adhere to the Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship[6] and to improve burden-sharing among donors, and in this respect encourages the private sector, civil society and other relevant entities to make relevant contributions, complementary to those of other sources;

36. *Calls upon* Member States, the United Nations and humanitarian organizations to identify better ways of working to address the increasing capacity and resource gap, in order to effectively meet the needs of affected populations;

37. *Calls upon* Member States that are in a position to do so and development and humanitarian partners, in their efforts to provide flexible resources, to consider ways of better mainstreaming the need for preparedness and building resilience in the provision of humanitarian and development assistance, including reconstruction and rehabilitation, inter alia, with a view to ensuring smooth transition from relief to development;

38. *Encourages* humanitarian and development actors to pursue, where appropriate, common risk-management and resilience objectives, achievable through joint analysis, planning, programming and funding;

39. *Calls upon* all Member States that are in a position to do so to increase their voluntary contributions to humanitarian emergencies, and in this context reiterates that the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs should benefit from adequate and more predictable funding;

40. *Welcomes* the important achievements of the Central Emergency Response Fund in ensuring a more timely and predictable response to humanitarian emergencies, stresses the importance of continuing to improve the functioning of the Fund, and in this regard encourages the United Nations funds and programmes and the specialized agencies to review and evaluate, where necessary, their partnership policies and practices in order to ensure the timely disbursement of funds from the Fund to implementing partners in order to ensure that resources are used in the most efficient, effective, accountable and transparent manner possible;

41. *Calls upon* all Member States, and invites the private sector and all concerned individuals and institutions, to consider increasing their voluntary contributions to the Central Emergency Response Fund, and emphasizes that contributions should be additional to current commitments to humanitarian programming and should not be to the detriment of resources made available for international cooperation for development;

[6] A/58/99-E/2003/94, annex II.

42. *Encourages* Member States, in cooperation with relevant United Nations humanitarian organizations, to ensure that the basic humanitarian needs of affected populations, including clean water, food, shelter, health, including sexual and reproductive health, education and protection, are addressed as components of humanitarian response, including through providing timely and adequate resources, while ensuring that their collaborative efforts fully adhere to humanitarian principles;

43. *Encourages* Member States, the United Nations and humanitarian organizations to continue to work together to understand and address the different protection needs of affected populations, particularly the most vulnerable, in humanitarian crises and ensure that these needs are adequately integrated into preparedness, response and recovery efforts;

44. *Reaffirms* the obligation of all States and parties to an armed conflict to protect civilians in armed conflicts in accordance with international humanitarian law, and invites States to promote a culture of protection, taking into account the particular needs of women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities;

45. *Also reaffirms* the obligations of all States and parties to an armed conflict, in accordance with international humanitarian law, to respect and protect humanitarian personnel, including medical personnel, facilities, transports and activities, which must not be attacked, and to ensure that the wounded and sick receive, to the fullest extent practicable and with the least possible delay, the medical care and attention required;

46. *Calls upon* States to adopt preventive measures and effective responses to acts of violence committed against civilian populations in armed conflicts and to ensure that those responsible are promptly brought to justice, in accordance with national law and their obligations under international law;

47. *Urges* all Member States to address gender-based violence in humanitarian emergencies in a strengthened manner and to ensure that their laws and institutions are adequate to prevent, promptly investigate and prosecute gender-based violence, and calls upon States, the United Nations and all relevant humanitarian organizations to improve coordination, harmonize response and strengthen capacity, with a view to preventing and reducing such violence and ensuring that humanitarian relief is provided in a way that mitigates the risk of gender-based violence, and to ensure that support services to victims and survivors of such violence are given due priority, beginning in the earliest stages of emergency response;

48. *Recognizes* the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement [7] as an important international framework for the protection of internally displaced persons, encourages Member States and humanitarian agencies to continue to work together, in collaboration with host communities, in endeavours to provide a more predictable response to the needs of internally displaced persons, and in this regard calls for continued and enhanced international support, upon request, for the capacity-building efforts of States and encourages humanitarian organizations to improve coordination, including with development organizations, to better address the needs of internally displaced persons in support of Member States to promote durable solutions;

[7] E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2, annex.

49. *Calls upon* all States and parties in complex humanitarian emergencies, in particular in armed conflict and in post-conflict situations, in countries in which humanitarian personnel are operating, in conformity with the relevant provisions of international law and national laws, to cooperate fully with the United Nations and other humanitarian agencies and organizations and to ensure the safe and unhindered access of humanitarian personnel, as well as the delivery of supplies and equipment, in order to allow such personnel to efficiently perform their task of assisting affected civilian populations, including refugees and internally displaced persons;

50. *Welcomes* the progress made towards further enhancing the security management system of the United Nations, and supports the approach taken by the Secretary-General to focus the efforts of the security management system on enabling the United Nations system to "stay and deliver" its most critical programmes even in high-risk environments by effectively managing the risks to which personnel are exposed, including in the provision of humanitarian assistance, and to adapt quickly to changes in local security conditions;

51. *Encourages* the United Nations and other relevant humanitarian actors to include, as part of their risk management strategy, the building of good relations and trust with national and local governments and to promote acceptance by local communities and all relevant actors in order to enable humanitarian assistance to be provided in accordance with humanitarian principles;

52. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report on actions taken to enable the United Nations to continue to strengthen its ability to recruit and deploy staff quickly, effectively and flexibly, to procure emergency relief materials and services rapidly, cost-effectively and locally, where applicable, and to quickly disburse funds in order to support Governments and United Nations country teams in the coordination of international humanitarian assistance;

53. *Welcomes* the initiative of the Secretary-General to hold the first World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, Turkey, in 2016, aimed at sharing knowledge and best practices in the humanitarian field to improve the coordination, capacity and effectiveness of humanitarian response, requests the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to ensure an inclusive, consultative, transparent preparatory process, encourages Member States and stakeholders to participate in and contribute to the process and outcome of the Summit, and encourages the Secretary-General to further engage Member States regarding the process and outcome of the Summit;

54. *Encourages* Member States to give appropriate consideration in the discussion on the post-2015 development agenda to disaster risk reduction, including building resilience and national and local preparedness and response capacity;

55. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its seventieth session, through the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2015, on progress made in strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations, including on the process and update on the World Humanitarian Summit, and to submit a report to the Assembly on the detailed use of the Central Emergency Response Fund.

70th plenary meeting
12 December 2014